

PARTICIPATING STATES

Co-Chairs

Columba Bush (Florida)
Mary Easley (North Carolina)
Hope Taft (Ohio)
Nancy Murkowski (Alaska)
Janet Huckabee (Arkansas)
Sharon Davis (California)
Frances Owens (Colorado)
Patricia Rowland (Connecticut)
Diane Williams (District of Columbia)
Lt. Gov. James Aiona (Hawaii)
Patricia J. Kempthorne (Idaho)
Judy O'Bannon (Indiana)
Judi Patton (Kentucky)
Daniel G. Mulhern (Michigan)
Lori Hauser Holden (Missouri)
Stephanie Johanns (Nebraska)
Dema Guinn (Nevada)
Barbara Richardson (New Mexico)
Libby Pataki (New York)
Mical Hoeven (North Dakota)
Jenny Sanford (South Carolina)
Anita Perry (Texas)
Sandy Wise (West Virginia)



Mr. Tom Watkins
Superintendent
Michigan Department of Education
608 W. Allegan
Lansing, MI 48933

EMERITUS GROUP

Co-Chairs

Vicky Cayetano (Hawaii)
Theresa Racicot (Montana)
Susan Knowles (Alaska)
Mary Herman (Maine)
Terry Ventura (Minnesota)
Cathy Keating (Oklahoma)
Sharon Kizaber (Oregon)
Michele Ridge (Pennsylvania)
Martha Sundquist (Tennessee)
Sue Ann Thompson (Wisconsin)
Sherri Geringer (Wyoming)

PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS

American Academy of Pediatrics
American Bar Association Standing Committee on Substance Abuse
American Medical Association Office of Alcohol and Other Drugs
Association of Village Council Presidents
Association of Women's Health Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses
Columbia University Joseph L. Mailman School of Public Health
Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America
Emergency Nurses CARE
Governors Highway Safety Association
The Kettering Foundation
Mothers Against Drunk Driving
National 4-H Council
National Alcohol Beverage Control Association
National Association for Children of Alcoholics
National Association of State Alcohol and Drug Abuse Directors
National Association of Student Assistance Professionals
National Conference of State Legislatures
National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence
National Crime Prevention Council
National District Attorneys Association
National Family Partnership
National Liquor Law Enforcement Association
National Medical Association
Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation Prevention Research Center
Students Against Destructive Decisions
United National Indian Tribal Youth
U.S. Conference of Mayors
Vanderbilt University School of Nursing

Dear Mr. Watkins:

As a member of the *Leadership to Keep Children Alcohol Free*, and as a concerned adult, I have been working to help stem the tide of underage drinking in our State and across the Nation. I know that as a concerned educator, you, too, have sought to encourage programs in our State's public schools to educate our youth about the dangers of underage alcohol consumption – and a range of other potentially dangerous risk-taking behaviors.

We both are aware that the vast majority of our youth do not drink alcohol; we are painfully aware of the potential repercussions for those who do – in lost educational opportunity, lost health, and, unfortunately, lost lives. Most of all, we are aware that these behaviors can be prevented through our concerted effort undertaken in collaboration with the parents of this State's youth. Most of our efforts have focused on teen-age Americans. However, data strongly suggest we must reach down with our messages to the late years of elementary school and middle school. Who better to carry that message than the people to whom youth turn most often for advice: their parents and their teachers.

I have learned that a new set of materials – developed by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services in partnership with *Scholastic Inc.* – is being made available for the second year to every fifth-grade classroom across the nation over the next few weeks. The materials include *Reach Out Now: Talk with Your Fifth Grader about Underage Drinking*, a four-page set of lessons and in-class activities for teachers to use as part of their classroom instruction. Also included is a second four-page “take-home” packet for students and their parents. *Talk with Your Fifth Grader about Underage Drinking* provides parents with helpful information, including activities that families can do together to help prevent underage drinking, and suggests actions parents can take to help their fifth grader make important decisions.

Founders: National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism and The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
Additional Funding Agencies: Office of Research on Women's Health/National Center on Minority Health and Health Disparities/Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention/Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration/National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

5530 Wisconsin Avenue, Suite 1600, Chevy Chase, Maryland 20815, Telephone: 301.654.6740, e-mail: leadership@alcoholfreechildren.org



As the leading educator in our State – and the leader of educators in our State – I hope you will recommend that the materials be used in classrooms across the State, encouraging local Boards of Education to include the lessons as part of their fifth-grade curricula.

I have enclosed copies of both the teacher and parent/student materials so you are fully informed and will consider the best use of these materials.

Sincerely,

Daniel Mulhern
First Gentleman of Michigan

Enclosures